

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KIGALI 00117 241514Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00
COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06
TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01
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FM AMEMBASSY KIGALI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5685

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KIGALI 0117

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIN, RW, LY

SUBJECT: NATIONAL BANK GOVERNOR LOSES BATTLE OVER
LIBYAN AID

REF: 77 KIGALI 1343

1. TWO SEPARATE SOURCES CONFIRMED TO US OVER WEEKEND
THAT NATIONAL BANK GOVERNOR BIRARA HAD DEFINITELY LOST
HOS BATTLE TO KEEP LIBYANS OUT OF BANKING SECTOR IN
RWANDA (REFTEL) AND WOULD BE LEAVING BNP POST IN JULY
OF THIS YEAR. CONTRARY TO GENERAL EXPECTATIONS, THESE
SOURCES SAY BIRARA WILL PROBABLY NOT ACCEPT LONGSTANDING
IMF OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT IN WASHINGTON, BUT WILL INSTEAD
REMAIN IN RWANDA AND OPEN PRIVATE CONSULTANCY FIRM.
WHILE THERE LITTLE LIKELIHOOD HE WILL WIN MUCH BUSINESS
IN LATTER ROLE, BIRARA IS SAID TO WANT TO DEMONSTRATE
HIS POLITICAL COURAGE RATHER THAN RESIGN HIMSELF TO
BEING "REFUGEE" IN INTERNATIONAL ORG.

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PAGE 02 KIGALI 00117 241514Z

2. MEANWHILE, AID/INVESTMENT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN RWANDA
AND LIBYA APPEAR TO BE SPEEDING UP. FONMIN NSEKALIJJE
MADE VISIT TO TRIPOLI LAST WEEK, APPARENTLY TO PERSUADE
LIBYANS TO RESUME CONSTRUCTION OF ONE HUNDRED-ROOM
TOURIST HOTEL IN KIGALI. LATTER PROJECT HAS BEEN STALLED
FOR ALMOST SIX MONTHS, APPARENTLY PENDING OUTCOME OF
INTERNAL RWANDA DISPUTE OVER LIBYAN BANK. NOW THAT

LATTER BACK ON TRACK AND BIRARA ON HIS WAY OUT, LIBYANS ARE EXPECTED TO RESUME HOTEL CONTRUCTION SHORTLY.

3. COMMENT: ALL THIS SUGGESTS AMAZING HIGH-HANDEDNESS ON PART OF LIBYANS IN FORCING GOR TO ACCEPT JOINT BANKING VENTURE ON LIBYAN TERMSN, AND IT SEEMS TO SIGNAL SETBACK FOR THOSE WITHIN GOR FAVORING STRONG FOREIGN PRIVATE SECTOR ROLE IN RWANDAN DEVELOPMENT, CERTAINLY BIRARA'S DEPARTURE -- IF AND WHEN IT FINALLY TAKES PLACE -- WILL DEPRIVE GOR OF SCARCE ECONOMIC EXPERTISE, ALTHOUT IT IS GENERALLY SUPPOSED THAT FINANCE MINISTER NTIRUGILIMBABAZI, A BIRARA PROTEGE, IS HEIR APPARENT TO BNR GOVERNORSHIP AND THUS RXPRESENTS SOME CONTINUITY. WHETHER LIBYANS WILL SUCCEED IN THIR HIGH-HANDED MANEUVERS TO GAIN PREDOMINANT VOICE IN RWANDAN ECONOMY REMAINS TO BE SEEN: BIRARA IS BY NO MEANS THE ONLY RWANDAN OFFICIAL REACTING NEGATIVELY TOWARD LIBYANS RIGHT NOW. HOWEVER, SEE SEPTTEL REGARDING LIBYAN OFFER TO TRAIN RWANDAN PARACOMMANDOS. CRIGLER

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